



What's Happening at Blue Marsh Lake?

US Army Corps of Engineers

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The Hustle and Bustle of Summer

Summer at Blue Marsh can be described as interesting, exciting, amazing, and chaotic. The list could go on, but I think you get the picture!

Our summer seasonal staff consists of college students. The week prior to Memorial Day Weekend is spent training our seasonal rangers in a number of areas. This



training is done to prepare them for the summer crowds.

Boating, swimming, fishing and picnicking are the most popular summer activities at Blue Marsh Lake. But you can still avoid the summer crowds by taking to the hiking trails. You can still find peace and solitude along the trails. However, the hiking trail, as well as the Foxtrot and Skinners Hiking Loops are multi-use trails (foot use, mountain biking and horseback riding). This means that all users need to share the trail, and also show courtesy towards other users. Na-

ture trails are only open to foot use.

During the summer months the majority of use is on the lake itself. Those hot, humid summer days that southeastern Pennsylvania is known for, brings the crowds to Blue Marsh Lake. They have one thing in mind, and that is cooling down in the lake. Swimming is done at one's own risk, so be safe and responsible around the water.

Several programs will be offered throughout the summer months. A program schedule can be found on page three.

Hope you have a great and safe summer!

Fee Program

Its that time of year again. Blue Marsh Lake is ready for the summer season. And that means the Day Use Area and the Boat launches are now collecting the user fees. The fee to enter an area is three dollars per vehicle and one dollar per

person walking into the area. If there is no ranger in the fee booth, the fee is still charged, but we operate on the honor system.

To pay while the booth is empty, you take and envelope from the box, fill out the informa-

tion, deposit the fee, tear off the stub, and place it on your dashboard. This allows our rangers to see if you have paid the fee.

An annual pass is also available for \$30 and it is good for one year. This pass is accepted at all USACE projects.

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2005 Summer Programs:

- **Whooo Goes There? - June 24, 8:00 P.M. Conference Center**
- **Butterfly Walk—July 9, 10:00 A.M. Meet at Church Road Access**

Blue Marsh Lake Boat Trail

The Blue Marsh Lake Boat Trail was created by Lauren Terefenko in 2000 as her Gold Star project for Girl Scouts. Unfortunately, after one summer of use we needed to obtain additional brochures. However, we ran into numerous problems when trying to reproduce the map. We finally managed to overcome those problems, and now have a new brochure, complete with a map showing the trail route.

The trail can be accessed from the Church Road Access, which is located along Old Church Road off of PA State Route 183. There is a trailhead in the grass area just adjacent to the parking

lot. Trail brochures are available at the trailhead.

There are eight stops along the boat trail. Four of the stops (1-4) are located north of Old Church Road Bridge, and four (5-8) are located south of the bridge. All trail stops are marked with blue and white boat trail decals and diamonds on brown Carsonite posts. These markers are located along the shoreline, and are visible from the lake.

This trail is especially ideal for kayaking and canoeing. But remember to wear your Coast Guard approved lifejacket.

While following the trail users will learn about Blue Marsh Lake, and how the Corps of Engineers manages the project for both our human users, and the wildlife that live in and around the lake.



Fishing at Blue Marsh Lake

Fishing at Blue Marsh is one of the most popular forms of recreation at the Lake and you don't have to be a professional to have fun. Some of the species you will encounter are bass, walleye, musky, catfish, and blue gill.

If you have a boat you should search for "structures" to find the big ones. This means you should look for downed trees, rock walls, shoals, underwater rock for-

mations, and channels. These are places where the big fish like to hide and wait for their prey.

Don't fret if you don't have a boat. Try your luck under a bridge, on a rocky shore line, or right next to tree that has fallen into the lake. If you are fishing from shore, you will have the best luck with live bait or chicken liver. The catfish have been really biting this year!



Employee Spotlight

This edition of the employee spotlight features our long term (six month appointment) seasonal ranger Kevin Lutz. Kevin is back for a third summer at the lake. And if working full time at the lake isn't enough, he is also working part time for the Berks County Parks Department.

Kevin is a graduate of Conrad Weiser High School, where he was involved in the Agriculture Dept., the envirothon, and the

FFA. He is a recent Graduate of Penn State with a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science.

Kevin worked on a dairy farm for four years before working for Redner's Warehouse Markets. He then worked for the Lancaster County Food and Cover Crew in the PA Game Commission.

Kevin enjoys hunting (especially water fowl and small game), fishing, hiking, and bird

watching. He also enjoys playing football and his Friday nights are spent at the Green Dragon.



Be Water Safety Wise

Did you know that drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death (behind auto accidents) for persons ages 1-44 years? If your plans include water-based activities we want you to have a safe and enjoyable experience.

First of all, leave the alcohol at home, as it does not mix well with water sports. Alcohol affects our judgment, reaction time, and ability to focus and concentrate, which is especially important when boating.

Do not swim alone, or beyond your abilities. Never dive into

cloudy or murky water, as there could be rocks, tree branches, or other obstacles under the water that you cannot see. Ease yourself into the water feet first. Approximately 1,000 disabling neck and back injuries occur annually as a result of water activities, including headfirst entry into shallow water.

When boating never bring a person on-board from the water unless the power has first been turned off. Engine propellers might spin even when in neutral. By having the power turned off, there is less chance of propeller injuries occurring.

Always wear a Coast Guard

approved life jacket. How do you know if it is an approved life jacket? There is a stamp/seal on the inside of the life jacket. Who has to wear a life jacket in Pennsylvania? All water skiers and anyone being towed behind a vessel, personal watercraft (Jet Skis, Wave Runners, etc.) operators and passengers, sailboarders (windsurfers) and children 12 years of age or younger must wear an approved lifejacket when underway on boats 20 feet or less in length and in all canoes and kayaks.

So if your summer plans include recreating on the water, do it safely and responsibly. Have a great summer!

2005 Summer Programs

Whooo Goes There?: Friday, June 24, 8:00 p.m. at the Conference Center. Fire up that sense of adventure and join us on a nighttime safari, and discover what goes “bump” in the night. Bring a flashlight, and wear insect repellant!

Butterfly Walk: Saturday, July 9, 10:00 a.m. at the Church Road Access. Local naturalist and butterfly expert, Karl Gardner, will be leading a butterfly walk in the fields adjacent to Church Road Access. Bring binoculars and guidebooks.

Bat Program: Friday, August 5, 7:00 p.m. at the Conference Center. Presented by Dr. Karen Campbell, Professor of Biology at Albright College. She will start with an excellent slide presentation. This will be followed by a visit to a near-by little brown bat colony. Bring flashlight, and keep that insect repellant handy.

Star Watch: Friday, August 26, 7:00 p.m. at the Dry Brooks Day Use Area Vista Pavilion. Rain date is Saturday, August 27, 7:00 p.m. Presented by the Berks County

Amateur Astronomical Society. They will begin the night with a brief presentation. When the sun comes down, and the stars come out we will move to the telescopes, which are provided by the Society. This will be an excellent opportunity to view Mars, which will be the closest it has been to Earth in recent history. Mars will never again be this close to Earth in our lifetime.

Come out and enjoy, as all programs are free!

Canoeing and Kayaking

Non-powered boating is quickly becoming one of the most popular forms of water recreation in the country and Blue Marsh has its share of great places to try it out.

You can launch your craft from any of the boat launches or anywhere you can drag it to the water. A great place to start from

is at our peacock road access area, where our newly renovated bridge allows for a much easier access to the lake. Our “no wake” zones are the best place to canoe or kayak because there are fewer powered boats and they all must travel at idle speed. Also remember, everyone must have a life jacket and all craft launched from Sheidy Boat

Launch (Fish Commission Launch) must be registered.



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A Look at the Osprey

The Osprey is a large eagle-like hawk found in north America. It inhabits seacoasts and areas near large rivers and lakes. In Pennsylvania, it shows up along the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers and near other lakes, ponds, and rivers.

Their colors are dark on the top and white on the bottom with juveniles and adults looking largely alike. Their heads are white with a black patch across each side of its head.

Ospreys are hunters above the water and eat the fish that they catch. They will hover 50-150 feet

above the water and crash down to catch their prey, sometimes going all the way under.

The osprey is about 21-24 inches from bill to tail with a wingspan of 4 1/2 to 6 feet long. Their standing height is 1 1/2 feet. Their call is a series of loud whistles.

The Osprey migrate through in the spring and most head south for the winter, but it is not out of the question to see one winter in PA.

Like Eagles, Osprey build large bulky nests on just about any

structure near water and they reuse the nest from year to year. The Osprey may be nearly gone as a breeding species in Pennsylvania, but the Game Commission is working to re-establish this bird of prey.

